

HOPE ANIMAL-ASSISTED CRISIS RESPONSE

Report of Animal Welfare Committee November 10, 2007

Committee Members:

Chair: Claudine Singer
Member: Roxanna Sanchez
Member: Diane Valantine
Member: Dave Valantine
Member: Judy Johns (Latham Letter Editor)

Purpose of the committee:

The purpose of the Animal Welfare committee is to research, create, and recommend to the Board of Directors national policies for the humane care and treatment of HOPE animals while on duty.
Report of project:

This very important work has now been ongoing since November 2005, with the existing Committee. The committee meets on a monthly basis for approximately 4 to 5 hours on a Sunday afternoon. The progress of our work is as follows:

We have defined:

"Animal Welfare" Welfare – As defined by Broom and Johnson, 1993

"Levels of Incidents": Level 1 - Level 2 - Level 3 - Level 4

"Variables-Risk Indexes" These are factors that affect our dogs on callouts.

Travel
Temperature (working environment) Hot weather / Dew point
Temperature (working environment) Cold weather / Wind chill
Living Conditions
Predictability (Deployment Scene)
Noise Exposure
Congestion (At the scene)
Air Quality Index
Team Experience
K9 Characteristics (Working in hot climate)
K9 Characteristics (Working in cold climate)

A section on "Hazardous Materials" will be part of the manual, and will be reviewed by Captain Art Saenz of the Ventura County Fire Department. Captain Saenz speaks on "Hazardous Materials" all over the country. We have had the privilege of having Captain Saenz come and teach here in the PSW region for the past two years.

Each Variable Risk factor has been studied and documented. Each Variable Risk has been broken down and given a point scale of 1 to 10, which indicates increasing stress. Number 1 represents the least amount of stress the animal will be exposed to and number 10 represents the danger zone, to which a team should not participate. A team would look at each of these risks and determine how the scene might affect their dog, and how long they should remain on-scene. This will be determined by a color coded chart which is under development

We have started to work on a draft Power Point presentation for Animal Welfare, which will be used as a teaching tool. An overview of this material was taught at the 2007 PSW workshop.

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Currently we are finishing the study of each "Variable" from the Risk index, identifying the characteristics that determine the point system of 1 through 10. We are doing this analysis to give each team a good understanding of every facet they will be faced with prior to being deployed and what they need to look for once they are at the scene of a crisis/emergency situation.

The last two variables will to work on are "Temperature – Hot and Cold"

Other segments we have also worked on are as follows:

Dog's Body Language & Stress Signals
Zoonotics
Backpack & First Aid kit recommendations
SOS Card
Pet Poison Safety Tips

The information gathered has come from various resources such as US Government web sites, Internet research, misc. books, written articles, work experience, etc.

Presentation materials will be developed for the purpose of training HOPE AACR teams.

**Pawsitively,
Claudine Singer
Animal Welfare Chair**